

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

THE IMMIGRATION OVERSIGHT AND FAIRNESS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Immigration Oversight and Fairness Act, which will help address the shameful state of immigration detention in our country.

It is unconscionable that our government holds families in conditions reserved for hardened criminals, forces children caught on their own to spend harrowing nights in border jails and incarcerates in bare cells asylum seekers who came to these shores in search of freedom. These inexcusable abuses should never have happened, and Americans never should have tolerated them.

By strengthening existing regulations and giving them the force of law, the Immigration Oversight and Fairness Act will help ensure that the Department of Homeland Security does not violate its own detention standards.

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My bill ensures that all detainees can communicate with their lawyers and obtain needed medical care. It will also help to expand legal orientation programs so that detainees understand their rights and the likelihood of winning their cases.

The Immigration Oversight and Fairness Act also protects vulnerable children who are arrested on their own and held in DHS custody at border stations. A recent report by the Women's Refugee Commission found that the Border Patrol continues to hold unaccompanied immigrant children in inappropriate conditions. This bill increases training for the Border Patrol officers and facilitates speedy transfers of children to safer, better-equipped facilities.

In addition, the bill expands the use of alternatives to detention. It costs the American taxpayer nearly \$2 billion a year to house detainees, yet the vast majority of detained immigrants pose no threat to their communities or our country. This legislation will make it possible for vulnerable populations—including asylum seekers, torture victims, families, pregnant women, and the elderly—to be released using secure, proven methods of supervision that come at a fraction of the cost of incarceration.

Addressing the problems that plague our detention facilities will require a new commitment to openness and transparency. This bill, therefore, has oversight and accountability provi-

sions which will shine a much-needed light on a system that, for too long, has operated in the shadows.

Because it introduces sensible reforms to correct the many failings of immigration detention in this country, the Immigration Oversight and Fairness Act has garnered broad-based support. More than 100 faith, human rights, civil liberties, immigrant and community organizations have signed a letter endorsing my bill. I would like to specifically thank the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, the American Immigration Lawyers Association, and the National Immigrant Justice Center for the important role they played in formulating this legislation and for the tireless work they do every day on behalf of immigrant detainees.

Mr. Speaker, the detention system in which thousands of detainees languish daily—frequently denied access to loved ones, legal counsel, and medical care—is incompatible with our laws and inconsistent with our American values.

The Immigration Oversight and Fairness Act will ensure that our government honors its most sacred obligations: to respect our laws and to protect the children entrusted to its care.

I look forward to working with the Obama administration to fix America's broken immigration system, and I ask my colleagues to support the Immigration Oversight and Fairness Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE of Texas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

COMMISSION WITH TEETH: FORCING CONGRESS TO ADDRESS ENTITLEMENT ISSUE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, today the President released his budget request which projects a \$1.8 trillion deficit this year and a \$533 billion deficit for 2013. Yet, the Congressional Budget Office ran a deficit projection using a baseline which assumed the policies in the President's budget request contends that the FY 2013 deficit will be a staggering \$715 billion.

President Obama's pledge of cutting the deficit in half is important, but it will still be at record levels. In this morning's Washington Post, Maya MacGuineas, president of the bipartisan Committee For a Responsible Federal Budget, said she would like "To see them [the Obama Administration] go much further in terms of fiscal responsibility in actually closing that deficit gap."

More to the point, Brian Riedl, budget analyst for the Heritage Foundation,

says, "It is easy to cut the deficit in half after you've quadrupled it."

Today's Politico features an article titled, "Arguments Lost in Blizzard of Billions," which contends—and I agree—that Congress is so desensitized to numbers that "a billion here, a billion there, pretty soon you're talking about—well, pretty soon no one has a clue what you're talking about."

Have we forgotten that we have over \$56 trillion in unfunded obligations through Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid—already saddled on the back of future generations—\$11 trillion of debt? Do elected officials know that Standard and Poor's Investment Service predicts the loss of America's triple-A bond rating as early as 2012?

When Secretary of State Clinton was in Beijing last week, she asked the Chinese—who now holds the paper of about 1 of every 10 American dollars—to keep buying our debt. I never thought I would see the day when the United States was forced to hold a tin cup in China mortgaging the future for our children and our grandchildren to some of the worst human rights violators in the world.

We are in a crisis today. Main Street is suffering. Americans everywhere understand our country is in serious trouble—we are sinking—and it is on this Congress' watch. The 111th Congress is doing nothing.

Confidence. The definition of "confidence," according to Webster's Dictionary, is "faith or the belief that one will act in a right, proper, or effective way." "Act" being the key word.

Americans are under the belief that elected officials will work together to solve the Nation's most pressing problem. But if Congress is paralyzed by partisan bickering, what happens to the word "act"?

Entitlement spending and the massive debt we're leaving to our children and our grandchildren are pressing issues of economic and moral—this is a moral issue. The Tenth Commandment says, "Thou shalt not steal." Well, this generation is stealing from the next generation. Every day the canyon of debt widens and deepens, and yet elected leaders—many hiding behind the mantra of regular order—seem to think the problem will magically go away. The fact is, congressmen give speeches and say, "I'm all for this. I'm concerned. But let's go through regular order."

When it goes through regular order and it goes through the Budget Committee, when it goes through regular order and it goes through the Ways and Means Committee, it is dead. This Ways and Means Committee this year will not act unless they're forced to act by changing the process.

With that, Mr. Speaker, we have to act to get control of our debt for our children and our grandchildren.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, today the President of the United States continued a tradition that has existed since the beginning of this Republic, and that is for the Presidents of the United States to send to Congress a message including his budget. This is the blueprint for this administration in the area of taxation and spending for the foreseeable future.

At the outset, Mr. Speaker, let me give the President credit where credit is due. We should remark that the President's budget does highlight the dire problem with unsustainable growth and entitlement spending. He acknowledges that, as it should be acknowledged, and he does it up front. And for that, he is due respect.

Secondly, the President does propose to fix the alternative minimum tax, the AMT, and builds the impact of this proposal into his budget's out-year projections. Now, this is something the previous administration did not do. So this is an improvement in terms of what we might call accounting procedures.

The reform of the AMT does fall short of full reform since it only adjusts for inflation, and bracket creep will push more and more of our constituents, the taxpayers of America, on to the AMT, which was originally considered to catch just a few, a handful, of multimillionaires who, in periods of time some decades ago, escaped any payment of taxes—not because they did anything illegal, but because they took advantage of various tax credits, tax shelters, et cetera, that were then available in the Tax Code.

The President does one courageous thing, I would suggest. He asks us to consider means testing Medicare Part D premiums. Always a controversial issue but one that the President at least presented us with the facts forcing us to deal with those facts.

And the President should be commended for proposing in this budget for emergencies. The previous President, President Bush, set aside \$5.6 billion in a reserve for emergencies in his first budget, but President Obama should be advised that the results of that were that Congress quickly spent the re-

serve on other problems—base programs, not emergency programs. And there is a tendency in this body, and that on the other side of the Capitol, to do the same thing.

Now, those are the things for which I can give the President credit, but overall, this budget is of great concern to me and ought to be great concern to the rest of the American people.

What it would do is increase the national debt by \$2.7 trillion. That's not billion; it's trillion with a "T." \$2.7 trillion this year to \$12.7 trillion requiring another increase in the debt limit which was just increased to \$12.1 trillion in the stimulus bill. It actually doubles the national debt in 8 years.

Now, I know my friends on the other side of the aisle have said, "How can you Republicans speak? You didn't do a very good job." And I will be the very first to admit that when I came back here after an absence of 16 years, I was surprised by the lack of intestinal fortitude in this institution towards fiscal responsibility, and my party was in charge.

You might say, well, President Bush allowed the debt to rise from the first day he was in office to the day he left by \$4.9 trillion. That is a record. But President Obama has already shown us that he's a record breaker because under his budget, the debt is projected to increase by \$5.6 trillion in just 3 years.

How are we going to take care of this? Are we going to be more indebted to the Communist Chinese? Are we going to be more indebted to those around the world? When do we stop the printing presses printing our money? When does the impact of that fall on our most vulnerable in this society, that is those on fixed incomes, when the value of the dollar they have in their pocket or in their bank account or somewhere in the their investment portfolio is worth less than it was just a few months before?

So we raise taxes by \$1.4 trillion over the next 10 years. Now, some of it doesn't really look like taxes because it's called cap and trade revenues. Cap and trade. So under the guise of global warming or climate change, we now are going to have a huge tax increase.

So what we have here is a budget with some small good points, huge debt, huge taxes. That's not the way forward. We must do something better. We can do better.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PAUL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SCHIFF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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NOT DOING AWAY WITH "POLITICS AS USUAL"

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker; you and I are freshmen colleagues, and it's wonderful to see you in the chair this afternoon.

You and I came to this Congress as freshmen with a desire to do away with "politics as usual" and start anew. And what I saw yesterday on this floor was not exemplary of that particular goal of mine, and I suspect yours and some of our other freshmen colleagues as well.

What I saw was a rule that was brought to the floor that would prevent us from discussing amendments to the big omnibus \$410 billion spending bill. If you voted for that amendment to stop amendments to the bill, that was your way of being able to voice support for keeping congressional salaries capped. So those of us who are fiscal conservatives had to vote for that amendment in order to be consistent and true to our fiscal conservative roots; but at the same time, we had to disallow ourselves the opportunity to debate and discuss a \$410 billion spending package. So I want to discuss it a little bit today. That bill has already passed, but there are some concerns I have about it, especially when coupled with the stimulus package we passed, especially when coupled with the President's budget that we just received today.

Some of my concerns are these: the President's proposal would provide that those who are making \$250,000 a year and above will be those who are subject to a tax increase. That applies to many of our small businesses in the United States. And my State of Wyoming has no large businesses; it is entirely made up of small businesses. And those businesses create jobs for 70 percent of the jobs in this Nation. So we are, in essence, going to tax those who are creating jobs. And to me, when we're in a budget crisis and a fiscal crisis and a mortgage crisis, those are the wrong people to whom to turn and ask for more revenue.